

A
P O E M

To the MEMORY of

Mr. *CONGREVE*.

Inscribed to her GRACE,

H E N R I E T T A,

Dutchess of MARLBOROUGH.

P O E M

MR COX

HENRY J. A.

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L O N D O N:
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(8)



Advertisement.

TH E author of the following Poem, not having had the happiness of a personal acquaintance with Mr. CONGREVE, is sensible that he has drawn his private character very imperfectly. This all his friends will readily discover: and therefore, if any one of them had thought fit to do justice to those amiable qualifications, which made him the love and admiration of all that knew him, these verses had never seen the light.

P O F M

ME COZ LVE

HENRIETTA

O

(7)

A
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To the MEMORY of

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Dutcheſs of *Marlborough*.

O FT has the muſe, with mean attempt,
employ'd

Her heaven-born voice to flatter prosperous
guilt,

Or

8 *APOEM to the Memory*

Or trivial greatness : often stoop'd her song
To sooth ambition in his frantick rage,
The dire destroyer, while a bleeding world
Wept o'er his crimes. Of this pernicious skill
Unknowing I, these voluntary lays
To genuine worth devote; to worth, by all
Confess'd and mourn'd ; to CONGREVE NOW
no more.

First of the fairer kind ! by heaven adorn'd
With every nobler praise ; whose smile can lift
The MUSE unknown to fame, indulgent now
Permit HER strain, ennobled by a name,
To all the better few, and chief to thee,
Bright MARLBRO', ever sacred, ever dear.

La-

Lamented Shade ! in him the comic Muse,
Parent of gay instruction, lost her lov'd,
Her last remaining hope ; and pensive now
Resigns to Folly, and his mimic rout,
Her throne usurp'd : presage of darker times,
And deeper woes to come ! with taste declin'd
Fallen vertue droops ; and o'er th' ill-omen'd

age,

Unseen, unfear'd, impend the thousand ills
That wait on ignorance : no CONGREVE now
To scourge our crimes, or laugh to scorn our
fools,

A new and nameless herd. Nature was his,
Bold, sprightly, various : and superiour Art,
Curious to chuse each better grace, unseen
Of vulgar eyes ; with delicacy free,

B

Tho'

10 *A POEM to the Memory*

Tho' labour'd happy, and tho' strong refin'd,
Judgment, severely cool, o'erlook'd his toil,
And patient finish'd all : each fair design
With freedom regular, correctly great,
A Master's skilful daring. Closely wrought
His meaning Fable, with deep art perplex'd,
With striking ease unravel'd : no thin plot
Seen thro' at once and scorn'd ; or ill conceal'd
By borrow'd aids of mimickry and farce.
His Characters strong-featur'd, equal, just,
From finer nature drawn : and all the mind
Thro' all her mazes trac'd ; each darker vice,
And darling folly, under each disguise,
By either Sex assum'd, of study'd ease,
False friendship, loose severity, vain wit,
Dull briskness, shallow depth, or coward-rage.

of Mr. CONGREVE. II

Of the whole Muse possess'd, his piercing eye
Discern'd each richer vein of genuine mirth,
Humour or wit; where differing, where agreed;
How counterfeited, or by folly's grin,
Or affectation's air: and what their force
To please, to move, to shake the ravish'd scene
With laughter unprov'd. To him the Soul,
In all her higher workings, too was known:
What passions tumult there; whence their prompt
spring,
Their sudden flood of rage, and gradual fall;
Infinite motion! source supreme of bliss,
Or woe to man; our heaven, or hell, below!

Such

12 *A POEM to the Memory*

Such was his public name ; nor less allow'd
His private worth : by nature made for praise.
A pleasing form ; a soul sincere and clear,
Where all the human graces mix'd their charms,
Pure candor, easy goodness, open truth,
Spontaneous all : where strength and beauty
join'd.

With wit indulgent ; humble in the height
Of envy'd honours : and, but rarely found,
Th' unjealous friend of every rival-worth.
Adorn'd for social life : each talent his
To win each heart ; the charm of happy ease,
Free mirth, gay learning, ever-smiling wit,

To

To all endear'd, a pleasure without pain :
What HALLIFAX approv'd, and MARLBRO'
mourns.

Not so th' illiberal mind, where knowledge
dwells,
Uncouth and harsh, with her attendant, Pride,
Impatient of attention, prone to blame,
Disdaining to be pleas'd ; condemning all,
By all condemn'd ; for social joys unfit,
In solitude self-curst, the child of spleen.
Oblig'd, ungrateful ; unoblig'd, a foe ;
Poor, vitious, old : such fierce-ey'd ASPER was.
Now meaner CENUS, trivial with design,
Courts poor applause by levity of face,
And scorn of serious thought ; to mischief
prompt,

Tho'

14 *A POEM to the Memory*

Tho' impotent to wound ; profuse of wealth,
Yet friendless and unlov'd ; vain, fluttering, false :
A vacant head, and an ungenerous heart.

But flighting these ignobler names, the Muse
Pursues her favourite SON, and sees him now,
From this dim spot enlarg'd, triumphant soar
Beyond the walk of Time to better worlds,
Where all is new, all wonderful, and all blest !
What art thou, death ! by mankind poorly
fear'd,
Yet period of their ills. On thy near shore,
Trembling they stand, and see thro' dreaded
mists
'Th' eternal port, irresolute to leave

This

This various misery, these air-fed dreams
Which men call life, and fame. Mistaken
minds !

'Tis reason's prime aspiring, greatly just ;
'Tis happiness supreme, to venture forth
In quest of nobler worlds ; to try the deeps
Of dark futurity, with HEAVEN our guide,
Th' unerring HAND that led us safe thro'
time :

That planted in the soul this powerful hope,
This infinite ambition of new life,
And endless joys, still rising, ever new,

These CONGREVE tastes, safe on th' eth'ral
real coast,

Join'd to the numberless, immortal quire

16 *APOEM to the Memory*

Of spirits blest. High-seated among these,
He sees the public Fathers of mankind,
The greatly Good, those universal Minds,
Who drew the sword, or plan'd the holy
scheme,

For liberty and right; to cheque the rage
Of blood-stain'd tyranny, and save a world.

Such, high-born MARLBRO', be thy Sire
divine

With wonder nam'd: fair freedom's champion
he,

By heaven approv'd, a conqueror without
guilt.

And such, on earth his friend, and join'd on
high

By

of Mr. CONGREVE. 17

By deathless love, GODOLPHIN's patriot-
worth,

Just to his country's fame, yet of her wealth
With honour frugal ; above interest great.

Hail men immortal ! social VERTUES hail !
First heirs of praise ! — But I, with weak essay,
Wrong the superiour theme : while heavenly
quires,

In strains high-warbled to celestial harps,
Resound your names ; and CONGREVE's ad-
ded voice

In heaven exalts what he admiri'd below.

With these he mixes, now no more to swerve
From reason's purest law ; no more to please,
Borne by the torrent down, a sensual age.
Pardon, lov'd shade, that I with friendly blame

C,

Slight-

18 *APOEM to the Memory*

Slight-note thy error ; not to wrong thy worth,
Or shade thy memory (far from my soul
Be that base aim) but haply to deter,
From flattering the gross vulgar, future pens,
Powerful like thine in every grace, and skill'd
To win the listening soul with vertuous charms.

If manly thought and wit refin'd may hope
To please an age, in aimless folly sunk,
And sliding swift into the depth of vice.
Consuming Pleasure leads the gay and young
Thro' their vain round ; and venal Faith the
old,
Or Avarice, mean of soul : instructive arts
Pursu'd no more : the general taste extinct,
Or all-debas'd : even sacred liberty

The great man's jest, and BRITAIN's welfare
nam'd,

By her degenerate Sons, the Poets dream,
Or fancy's air-built vision, gaily vain.

Such the lost age: yet still the Muse can find,
Superiour and apart, a sacred band,
Heroic vertues, who ne'er bow'd the knee
To sordid Interest: who dare greatly claim
The Priviledge of men, unfearing truth,
And freedom, heaven's first gift; th' ennobling
bliss

That renders life of price, and cheaply fav'd
At life's expence; our sum of happiness.

On these the drooping Muses fix their eyes;
From these expect their ancient fame restor'd.
Nor will the hope be vain: the public Weal
With theirs fast-link'd: a generous truth conceal'd
From narrow-thoughted power, and known alone

To

20 *APOEM to the Memory*

To souls of highest rank. With these, the Fair
Be join'd in just applause; the brighter few,
Who rais'd above gay folly, and the whirl
Of fond amusements, emulate thy praise,
Illustrious MARLBRO'; pleas'd, like thee, to
shine

Propitious on the Muse; whose charms inspire
Her noblest raptures, and whose goodness crowns.

T H E E N D.

